

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1-3 will remain pending in the above-identified application and stand ready for further action on the merits.

The amendments made herein to the claims do not incorporate new matter into the application as originally filed. In this respect, claim 1 has been amended to recite limitations previously found in claim 7, while claim 2 has been amended to recite limitations previously found in claim 8. Notably, because claim 3 depends from claim 1, the newly added limitation of claim 1 is inherently also recited in claim 3.

It is noted that even though the outstanding Office Action is final, entry of the present amendment is appropriate at present, since Applicants have cancelled claims 7-9 indicated as allowable and have inserted their limitations into claims 1-2. Accordingly, the amendment made herein does not raise new issues for the USPTO's consideration, but instead simplifies all outstanding issues by limiting claims to subject matter already indicated as allowable. Accordingly, entry of the present amendment is respectfully requested at present.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC § 102/103

Claims 1 and 3 stand rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Jensen (US 3,969,540). Further, claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ashmead (US 4,172,072). Reconsideration and withdrawal of each of these rejections is respectfully requested based upon the following considerations.

First, Applicants note that the limitations of claims 7-8 have been respectively inserted into claims 1-2. As noted in the outstanding Office Action, claims 7-9 were previously objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but were otherwise indicated to be allowable.

Consequently, based upon the amendment of claims 1-2 herein, it follows that each of claims 1-3 are allowable at present. Hence, reconsideration and withdrawal of all outstanding rejections is required at present.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the amendments and remarks presented herein, the Examiner is respectfully requested to issue a Notice of Allowance clearly indicating that each of pending claims 1-3 are allowable at present.

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Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John W. Bailey (Reg. No. 32,881) at the telephone number below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By 

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